

RESOLUTION NO. 20120614-024

WHEREAS, the City of Austin respects freedom of religious activities of all religions; and

WHEREAS, a significant portion of the Jewish community lives in Northwest Austin, and religiously observant members of the community desire to create an eruv to continue the tradition of observing the Sabbath within the modern realities of our built environment; and

WHEREAS, an eruv is an unobtrusive, and largely invisible, perimeter that symbolically turns a public area into shared community space; and

WHEREAS, an eruv allows religious Jews to carry items and push strollers and wheelchairs outside of their homes on the Sabbath when it would otherwise not be allowed; and

WHEREAS, the space may be defined by pre-existing utility poles and power lines by affixing comparable materials to the poles and neutral wires; and

WHEREAS, more than 100 communities in the U.S. have established an eruv, including Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio, and Austin is among the largest U.S. cities without an eruv; and

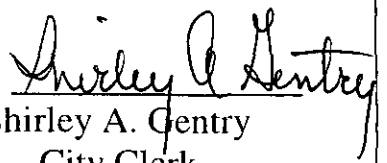
WHEREAS, in March 2010 the Northwest Austin Civic Association Board of directors endorsed the creation of an eruv in this area; and

WHEREAS, existing Austin Energy policies do not allow for this type of initiative to occur, and details regarding the types of materials, installation, and long-term maintenance need to be determined; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to work with all interested parties to determine the feasibility and logistics of creating an eruv with the following approximate boundaries: Texas State Hwy 1 (a.k.a. MoPac), RM 2222, Mesa Drive, and Spicewood Springs Drive. The City Manager should report back to Council by August 10th with a status update, including how other similar utilities have accomplished this.

ADOPTED: June 14, 2012

ATTEST: 
Shirley A. Gentry
City Clerk